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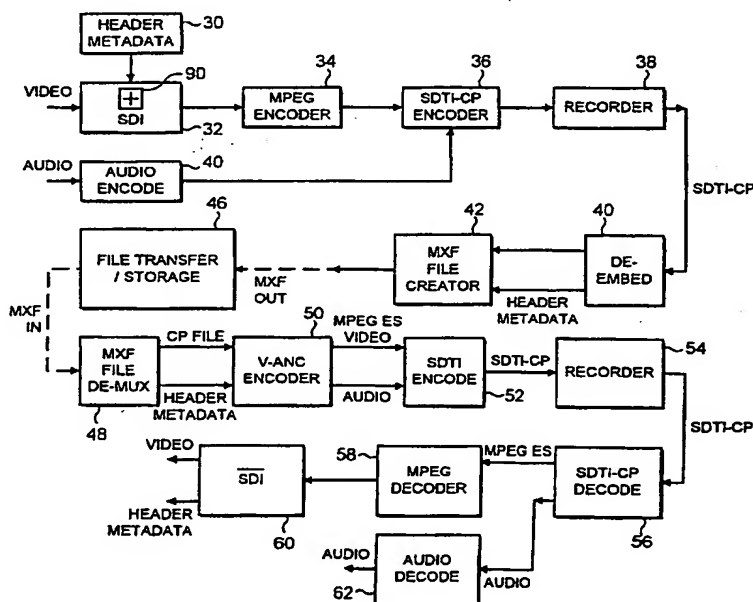
(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau(43) International Publication Date
14 March 2002 (14.03.2002)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 02/21845 A1(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **H04N 7/24**Hedley [GB/GB]; 17 Hamble Drive, Heathlands, Tadley,
Hampshire RG26 6UN (GB).(21) International Application Number: **PCT/GB01/03967**(22) International Filing Date:
4 September 2001 (04.09.2001)(74) Agents: **PRATT, Richard, Wilson et al.**; D. Young & Co.,
21 New Fetter Lane, London EC4A 1DA (GB).(25) Filing Language: **English**(81) Designated States (*national*): **JP, US.**(26) Publication Language: **English**(84) Designated States (*regional*): European patent (AT, BE,
CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC,
NL, PT, SE, TR).(30) Priority Data:
0021882.6 6 September 2000 (06.09.2000) **GB**(71) Applicant (*for all designated States except US*): **SONY
UNITED KINGDOM LIMITED** [GB/GB]; The Heights,
Brooklands, Weybridge KT13 0XW (GB).**Published:**— *with international search report*

(72) Inventor; and

(75) Inventor/Applicant (*for US only*): **WILKINSON, James,***For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.*(54) Title: **COMBINING VIDEO MATERIAL AND DATA**

(57) Abstract: A method of combining data with other material comprises the step of repetitively distributing the data in the other material. The data is for example metadata associated with the other material. The other material may be one or more of video, audio and data material preferably in a defined file format e.g. MXF. The material and data from the file are preferably mapped to one of several signal interfaces such as SDI, SDTI and AES3, where the file metadata is repetitively distributed through the stream signal interface by one of several multiplexing methods.

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COMBINING VIDEO MATERIAL AND DATA

The present invention relates to a method and apparatus for combining data with other material. The present invention also relates to a signal processing apparatus arranged to carry out the method, a digital bitstream and a computer program product.

5 'Material' means any one or more of video, audio, and data essence.

Embodiments of the invention relate to combining metadata with material. Preferred embodiments of the invention relate to combining metadata with video and audio material and the invention and its background will be discussed by way of example, and for greater clarity, with reference to such preferred embodiments but the
10 invention is not limited to that.

Metadata is information associated with material such as video and audio. Some types of metadata describe the form of encoding of e.g. a compressed video signal to assist in the decoding thereof. Other types of metadata describe the content of the video. For example such descriptive metadata may include the title of the video
15 and other information such as when and where the video was shot. Yet other types of metadata are technical information such as aspect ratio, lens used, video format etc. Yet further types include information such as Good Shot Markers, copyright information, and information about people appearing in the video. Many other types of data may be metadata.

20 A prior proposal suggested that metadata is stored separately from the material with which it is associated. The metadata may be stored in a data base and some means of linking it with the material is provided. Such means could be e.g. a code on a video-cassette. If the link is lost then the metadata cannot be associated with the material. If the database is destroyed then the metadata is lost. Thus it is desirable to
25 combine at least some metadata with the material.

It is necessary to store material in a store such as a digital video tape recorder (DVTR) or a digital disc recorder. It is also desirable to repeat metadata so that it can be accessed more easily in e.g. a tape record without needing to spool back to the beginning of the tape. However most DVTRs and disc recorders have a data format
30 which does not provide data space dedicated to metadata repeated at regular intervals in the digital bitstream.

According to one aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of combining digital data with other digital material comprising the steps of:

structuring the said digital data into a data structure having a key field, a length field and a value field, the value field containing the data;

5 creating a digital bitstream having a predetermined repetitive format compatible with a data recorder each repetition of the format including at least one data space for the said other material and a data space for other data; and

10 repetitively including the data structure over a plurality of repetitions of the format, the said data structure being included in the said other data space or in part of the data space of the said other material.

By including the data structure in the said format, the data structure can be accommodated in the format of the data recorder. The repetition allows the data structure to be accessed without the need to return to e.g. the beginning of a tape if the recorder is a tape recorder.

15 A further step of the method optionally comprises the step of mapping the combined data and other material into a file in which the said data structure is contained in one part of the file and the other material is contained in another part of the file.

20 Preferably the file comprises a file header, a file body containing the said other material and a file footer. Most preferably the file is an MXF file and the data is Header Metadata thereof.

Material, especially video and audio, may be stored in various different types of store including tape recorders and file servers and transferred between them. Thus by organising the combined data and other material as a file the transfer is facilitated.

25 The said format may be that of an SDI bitstream or that of an Serial Data Transport Interface (SDTI) bitstream, the said other material comprising at least video material which is uncompressed in the case of SDI and compressed in the case of SDTI. The compressed video material is contained in a picture item of an SDTI bitstream. Both formats are based on video frames.

30 Both formats may include audio frames, which can operate in audio and in non-audio mode. In an embodiment of the invention, the data structure is included in audio frames operating in non-audio mode.

SDI has a Vertical Ancillary Data (VANC) space. In an embodiment of the invention, the said data structure is included in the VANC space.

In SDTI, the VANC is included in the picture item data space. In an embodiment of the invention, the said data structure is included in the VANC space.

5 SDTI also has a system item. In an embodiment of the invention, the said data structure is included in the system item.

In preferred embodiments the data structure is encoded in a group of packets called a packet set. Each set includes an integer number of whole packets where the integer number includes one.. The packets include integer numbers of whole KLV
10 encoded items containing the data of the structure where a value field V contains the data, a length field indicates the length of the value field and a key field indicates the type of packet.

In SDI, one packet set preferably occupies one Vertical Blanking Interval (VBI) video line in the VANC space. The packet may be null-terminated to occupy
15 one VBI line.

In SDI, each repetition preferably begins in a new frame, and in a new packet in a new packet set.

In SDTI, one packet set preferably occupies one uncompressed video line in the VANC space. The packet set may be null terminated to occupy one whole line.

20 Alternatively, in SDI and in SDTI, one packet set preferably occupies one audio frame operating in non-audio mode. The packet may be null -terminated to occupy one whole audio frame.

Alternatively, in SDTI-CP, one packet set preferably occupies the metadata area of the system item data space.

25 A further aspect of the invention provides a computer program product containing program instructions which when run on a suitable signal or data processor implement the method of said one aspect of the invention.

Other aspects of the invention are specified in the claims to which attention is invited.

30 For a better understanding of the present invention, reference will now be made by way of example to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a schematic diagram of the overall data structure of an MXF file;

Figure 2 is a schematic diagram showing the data construct of header metadata of Figure 1;

Figures 3A to D are schematic diagrams showing the mapping of header metadata over a packet stream;

5 Figure 4 is a schematic block diagram of a signal processing and material transfer system;

Figure 5 is a schematic diagram of an SDI field;

Figure 6 is a schematic diagram of an SDTI-CP frame;

Figure 7 is a model of the data structure of SDTI-CP content package;

10 Figure 8 is a model of an element used in an SDTI-CP content package;

Figure 9 is a schematic diagram showing audio packets;

Figures 10 to 12 are schematic block diagrams of illustrative systems for implementing the system of Figure 4;

15 Figure 13 illustrates a network showing the video and audio material streamed over SDI/SDTI interfaces together with file transfer over a computer network interface; and

Figure 14 illustrates an alternative system for implementing the system of Figure 4.

20 MXF file

Referring to Figure 1, there is shown the overall data structure of a file. Such a file is referred to herein as an MXF file (Material eXchange Format). The purpose of the Material Exchange Format is to exchange programme material together with attached metadata information about the material body. The MXF file is intended
25 for the transfer of programme material and metadata between disc-based file servers for example.

MXF files are defined by a sequence of Key, Length, Value (KLV) coded data packets.

Header Metadata is structured as follows:

30 Individual metadata items coded with KLV,

Logical groupings of metadata items coded as metadata sets coded by KLV where the Value is a collection of KLV coded metadata items, and

Logical groupings of metadata sets coded by KLV where the value is a collection of KLV coded metadata sets;

5 where the top level is the Header Metadata at the outermost level.

The file comprises a file header, a file body and a file footer. The body contains the “essence” that is, in this example, video and/or audio essence data. The essence may alternatively be, or additionally include, essence data. The following description refers only to video and audio for convenience of description.

10 It will be appreciated that Figure 1 is not drawn to scale. The body is much greater than the preamble and post amble. The body may contain 99% or more of the total data content of the file.

The file header

The file header contains a **Preamble** followed by **Header Metadata**. and
15 optionally an index table.

The Pre-amble preferably starts with a fixed Run-in byte sequence of e.g. 8 bytes. That is followed by Key, Length Value (KLV) encoded preamble data pack which comprises:

an SMPTE Pack label of 12 bytes (the Key);
20 followed by one or more Length bytes, (4 in this example); which
is followed in this example by a null filled value field. The length byte indicates the amount of data in the value field.

The SMPTE pack label defines the File as an **MXF** file

The file footer

25 The MXF file is terminated by a File Footer. The footer contains an optional index table followed by a **Post-amble**.

The **Post amble** comprises a KLV encoded post-amble data pack. The post-amble data pack comprises a SMPTE pack label of 12 bytes, and one or more length bytes (4 in this example). In this example there is no value field and the length byte indicates a
30 length of zero. In some circumstances, a value may be in, or added to, the value field but would be ignored by an MXF decoder.

The Index Table

The index table provides a means of rapidly locating specific data, e.g. video frame starts, in the file body.

The index table is an optional metadata set, which can be used to locate
5 individual frames of video essence and related audio and data essence. Index files may be placed either immediately before the Body, immediately after the Body or optionally distributed throughout the Body.

An index table can be created 'on the fly' during file creation from a stream input and is notionally placed at the end of the file on recording. In practice, its
10 placement in a server file system may be anywhere for storage convenience. During transfer of a complete file, the Index table is placed in the MXF file header.

Index tables are not necessary for body container specifications which are defined with a constant number of bytes per frame, so their inclusion in the MXF file is optional.

Header Metadata.

The preamble comprises Header Metadata. The metadata may be any information associated with the essence contained in the file body. The metadata may be descriptive of the essence, be technical data relating to the essence or any other information.

20 By way of example only, descriptive metadata may comprise data relating to the production of video material such as Programme ID (PID), Title, Working Title, Genre ID, Synopsis, Director ID, Picturestamp, Keywords, Script, People, e.g. names and other details of performers and production crew.

By way of example technical metadata may comprise data such as display
25 aspect ratio, picture dimensions in pixels, picture rate, camera type, lens identification, and any other technical data.

Metadata may also comprise data relating to edits in the material. It may comprise instructions defining simple editing and other processes to be performed on the material.

Referring to Figure 2, the Header Metadata of the preamble comprises 16 bytes of Header Metadata Universal Label (UL), followed by a length byte followed by KLV encoded metadata sets (sets 1 to n) which constitute the data of the value field (V).

5 The UL defines the data value (V) following the UL as MXF Header Metadata.

Each KLV encoded metadata set n comprises a set UL of 16 bytes, which uniquely identifies that set, one or more length bytes and a set of KLV coded metadata items constituting the data in the value field V of the set. The length byte indicates the length of the value field. The UL defines the complete list of metadata items present in
10 the set n.

Each item is KLV encoded, comprising a 16 byte item UL, one or more length bytes and the data in the value field V. The UL defines the type of content in the value field.

It will be appreciated that a set n may itself contain a plurality of KLV encoded
15 sets of data. An item may contain one or more sets of KLV encoded data.

The File Body

An example of a file body will be described below. The example is an SDTI-CP content package containing MPEG encoded video. Other containers may be used.

The contents of the file body depend on the video, and/or audio and/or data essence
20 contained in it and the manner in which it is encoded. For example, video may be compressed or uncompressed. Several different forms of compression are possible.

Each essence frame is KLV encoded in the file body. In the case of an SDTI-CP content package, which contains different essence types, each type is separately KLV encoded.

25 Each container type has a unique and registered Universal Label UL as a Key in the KLV coding.

Each essence type within a container may have a unique key.

The amount of data in the file body is unlimited and bound only by the file header and file footer. The data in the file body could be for example many Gigabytes.

30 **MXF Header Metadata Repetition**

The Header Metadata may be repetitively distributed through the file body. The Header Metadata in the file body is additional to the Header Metadata in the preamble. This has the advantages that:

- if a file is interrupted during a transfer recovery of metadata is possible; and
- 5 an MXF file allows random access to data within the file body. The repetitive metadata allows easier and quicker access to metadata relating to randomly accessed data because it avoids the need to scroll to the beginning or end of the file.

Repetition of Header metadata in the file body is optional but has no connection with the repetition of metadata in accordance with embodiments of this invention.

- 10 The foregoing description sets out some of the basic features of MXF files. There are other features but they are not relevant to the present invention.

System overview

- Referring to Figure 4 a signal processing and material transfer system comprises a source 10 of source code, an optional encoder 12, an interface which
- 15 formats the source code or the encoded source code into a container and an interface 18 which encapsulates the container into the body of an MXF file. The MXF file is transferred to an interface 20 which decapsulates the file; i.e. retrieves the container from the body. The source code or the encoded source code is retrieved from the container in an interface 22. If encoded the source code is decoded in a decoder 26.
 - 20 The source code may be utilised in a utiliser 28 which may be for example a display device or any other processor which operates on or requires source code.

- The transfer from the interface 18 to the interface 20 may be by storage in a disc such as a computer data disc or transfer by a communications network using Internet Protocol Packets for example. Other means of transfer may be used including
- 25 other networks for example Ethernet and Fibre Channel.

The encoder 14 may be a compression encoder such as an MPEG2 encoder. Other forms of compression may be used. The decoder 26 corresponds to the encoder.

The interface 20 is an MXF decoder which is able to decode at least the following of an MXF file:

the KLV container structure of all parts of the file (including the data structure of any kind of Body);

the Header, including the Header Metadata structure; and

the Footer.

5 **Stream Interface for Uncompressed Material.**

An example of a stream interface for uncompressed digital video and audio material is the Serial Digital Interface (or Interconnect) (SDI) defined in SMPTE 259M. SDI is well known in the art and so will not be described in detail herein. Figure 5 is a schematic model of video and audio mapped onto the SDI structure. SDI
10 uses interlaced fields. In Figure 5, SAV denotes Start Active Video, EAV denotes End Active Video, H denotes line scan direction and F denotes vertical scan direction.

The SDI transport comprises a video frame in which data is carried in the lines of the frame. A field has essentially the same structure. The frame has a Vertical Blanking Interval (VBI), a Horizontal Blanking Interval and an active video space. In
15 SDI, the VBI can be used for the carriage of Vertical Ancillary Data (VANC), and the Horizontal blanking interval can be used for the carriage of Horizontal Ancillary data (HANC). The active video space is the space for the main data, e.g. digital video. AES/EBU digital audio channels may be contained in the HANC as defined by SMPTE 272M. Such audio channels comprise audio frames, (which are explained in
20 more detail below).

In accordance with illustrative examples of the invention, the VANC contains Header Metadata as described above.

In accordance with another embodiment Header Metadata may be mapped into audio frames of the audio channels. Each audio channel can carry either audio or non-
25 audio data where the non-audio data can be any data such as metadata. Whether data in an audio frame is audio or non-audio data is indicated by a flag in known manner.

Stream Interface for Compressed Material.

An example of a stream interface for compressed data such as MPEG 2 is SDTI CP which is described in SMPTE 326M. Figure 6 is a schematic diagram of an
30 SDTI-CP frame having two fields. An SDTI-CP field does not accommodate vertical

ancillary data VANC. The active video space contains lines allocated to "Items"-
System Item, Picture Item, Audio Item and Auxiliary Item. As shown in Figure 7, the
items contain one or more elements. Elements are shown in Figure 7 in relation to the
picture item as an example. An item comprises one or more elements. An element
5 comprises one KLV encoded data block as shown in Figure 8. Compressed video is
contained in a picture element within the picture item. An SDTI data stream may be
derived by mapping in known manner the data contained in an SDI data stream into an
SDTI data stream, together with compression of the video.

An MPEG 2 Elementary Stream (ES) may embed Vertical Ancillary Data
10 within the elementary stream according to the SMPTE standard SMPTE 328M. If the
SDTI CP stream is derived from SDI and VANC data exists, the VANC data is
mapped into the MPEG2 ES Ancillary Data space. In accordance with embodiments of
the invention, the VANC data is Header Metadata. The Ancillary Data space uses one
or more uncompressed video lines. The use of uncompressed video lines for ancillary
15 data reduces the data space (bandwidth) available for video.

An SDTI-CP audio item contains one or more audio elements which may
contain 1 to 8 audio channels in each element. Each audio channel within an element
can carry either audio or non-audio data where the non-audio data can be any data such
as metadata. Whether data in an audio frame is audio or non-audio data is indicated by
20 a flag in known manner. Header metadata may be mapped into audio frames in the
audio item in accordance with an embodiment of the invention.

Mapping Header Metadata over a packet stream

In accordance with embodiments of the invention, Header Metadata is
organised as shown in Figure 3.

25 Referring to Figure 3A, the overall data structure of Header Metadata is shown as a
single entity, and is exactly the same as shown in Figure 2. The complete Header
Metadata data structure is KLV encoded as shown in and described with reference to
Figure 2. It comprises the Universal Label (UL) of 16 bytes followed by one or more
length bytes followed by n sets of metadata in the value field.

30 Referring to Figure 3B, the complete data structure of Figure 3A is distributed into
p Packet Sets

Referring to Figure 3C, each Packet Set comprises m packets. As shown in Figure 3D each packet is KLV encoded. Referring to Figure 3D, a packet comprises

- a packet start sequence,
- a data type byte,
- 5 a length byte,
- a 1 byte channel ID,
- a packet count of two bytes,
- a set of complete metadata KLV blocks and
- a CRC code.

10 The channel ID plus the packet count plus the KLV blocks contain a maximum of 255 bytes in this example.

The channel ID provides a means of interleaving many different channels of metadata relating to different channels of essence. The channel ID identifies the channel to which the metadata belongs.

15 Ideally, the value field of a packet contains a set of complete KLV encoded metadata items as shown in Figure 2. However it is possible that an item has more than 252 bytes. In that case, the value field of the metadata item may be contained in more than one consecutive packet of a sequence of packets. The first packet of the sequence has a key, e.g. of 16 bytes, to allow the packets of the sequence to be
20 identified and to maintain the continuity of the data of the metadata item.

The first packet in a frame, if it is part of a multi packet sequence, also has such a key.

The packet count identifies the packet number within the defined channel number. Typically, this count uses 2 bytes which allows a sequence of up to 65536
25 packets. Packet count '0' is always the first packet in the message. Thus for example the packet count begins with packet 0 in packet set $p=1$ and continues incrementing throughout the p packet sets.

Mapping of Packets in accordance with embodiments of the invention

The packets of Header Metadata are mapped, and embedded in an SDI or SDTI data stream, on a repetitive basis, as follows:

- a) for uncompressed video over SDI, it is mapped into one or more VBI lines as VANC data;
- 5 b) for compressed bitstreams in SDTI, it is mapped into one or more compressed video frames of payload data space, being mapped into the ancillary data space such as may be provided by extensions to the MPEG2 ES syntax (as provided by the SMPTE standard SMPTE 328M); or
- 10 c) alternatively to a) and b), it is mapped into one or more audio frames of one or more audio channels, e.g. AES 3 channels operating in non-audio mode. Such channels exist in SDI, and in SDTI-CP.
- 15 d) The Header Metadata is padded to occupy an integer number of frames, so that when the Header Metadata is repeated it always starts in the same place on a new frame. By starting each complete data structure of Header Metadata on a new frame, break-up in editing operations is reduced or minimised.
- 20 e) The Header Metadata is packetised with a packet structure which includes at least the packet channel identification (the channel ID) for multiplexing with other packetised metadata, and the packet sequence count (so detection of the first packet is easy)
- 25 f) each repetition of a complete Header Metadata data structure starts in a new packet, preferably packet 0, for ease of data parsing
- g) Referring to Figure 9, when mapping Header Metadata into AES3 non-audio frames, the Metadata is mapped into a window spaced from the beginning and end of the audio frame by guard bands to increase reliability in the presence of timing errors or edits. The guard bands are null-filled.

An audio frame is the amount of audio data which occurs in the time interval of a video frame. For example, if analogue audio is sample at 48KHz, and the video frame rate is 25Hz, then an audio frame consists of $48000/25$ bytes = 1920 bytes.

Referring to Figure 3B:-

a) In SDI, the packet sets 1 to p are assigned to respective VBI lines in SDI and most preferably only two lines of VBI are used per SDI frame, (i.e. one line per field) although more than two lines per frame could be used;

b) In SDTI, the packet sets 1 to p are allocated to the ancillary data space
5 within an MPEG2 ES data stream;

c) Alternatively, in SDI and in SDTI the packet sets 1 to p are allocated to respective audio frames. Preferably one audio frame contains only one packet set.

Each packet set preferably occupies a whole SDI VBI line or audio frame with one packet set per line or per audio frame. Any spare data space on the line or in the
10 audio frame is null filled. One line or one audio frame typically contains about 1400 bytes in examples of the invention, that is about $m=5$ packets using V-ANC as shown in Figure 3C. Because one complete Header Metadata data structure is likely to be much greater than the data space available in one frame, it is spread over many packet sets 1 to p . For that purpose, the packet count is used sequentially to identify all the
15 packets over which it is spread and which contain one complete Header Metadata data structure. Because any spare space in a packet set in any frame is null-filled then the complete Header Metadata data structure occupies an integer number of frames. Once a complete Header Metadata data structure has been distributed over one group of p packet sets it is repeated in the succeeding group of p packet sets.

20 The repeat of the complete Header Metadata data structure begins in a new frame with packet 0 in packet set 1.

Several different complete Header Metadata data structures may be interleaved in respective channels identified by the channel IDs.

In summary, a complete Header Metadata data structure is distributed over an
25 integer number of packet sets. Each packet set has an integer number of packets. Preferably, one packet set occupies only one VBI line in SDI or one audio frame; any data space not used on the line or in the frame is null-filled. Each repeat of a complete Header Metadata data structure begins on a new video or audio frame in a new packet of preferably preset number such as packet 0. This allows each complete Header
30 Metadata data structure to be easily identified and its start position is easily found

because it is consistently aligned with the video frames in SDI or with the audio frames in SDI and SDTI.

In SDTI where the Header Metadata is embedded in an MPEG2 ES data stream in an SDTI picture item, the packets are contained in Ancillary data lines in
5 accordance with SMPTE 328M.

Illustrative implementations of the invention

Figures 10 to 12 are schematic block diagrams of illustrative systems for implementing the system of Figure 4, with the repetition of Header Metadata in accordance with the invention. In Figures 10 to 12 like blocks are denoted by like
10 reference numerals. The following descriptions of Figures 10 and 12 ignore the audio channel because it is not used in the embodiments of Figures 10 and 12 for containing Header Metadata.

In Figure 10, Header Metadata is created in a metadata creator 30. The header metadata has the data structure shown in Figures 2 and that metadata structure is
15 mapped into the packets shown in Figure 3. As described above in the section "*Mapping of Packets in accordance with embodiments of the invention*", the Header Metadata is inserted into the VANC of an SDI data structure using a suitable multiplexer 90 in an SDI interface 32 and the Header Metadata is repeated, each repeat beginning in a new packet (packet m=0) at the beginning of a VBI line in a new frame,
20 each complete Header Metadata data structure occupying a integer number of frames. Preferably as described above one frame contains only one whole packet set p on one VBI line.

The SDI data structure contains uncompressed digital video in its active video data space. An MPEG encoder 34 compresses the digital video into an MPEG2 ES
25 elementary stream and maps the SDI VANC containing the Header Metadata into the ancillary data space of the elementary stream.

An SDTI-CP interface maps the MPEG2 ES, containing the repeated Header Metadata, into the picture item of an SDTI-CP content package. There is no predetermined position or timing of the Header Metadata in the picture item of the
30 SDTI-CP content package.

A digital data store such as a digital video tape recorder or digital disc recorder 38 which is designed to store SDTI-CP content packages records the SDTI-CP content package. Because the Header Metadata is in the MPEG2 ES contained in the picture item, the recorder 38 is able to store the repeated metadata without violating its
5 formatting rules.

The video and the header Metadata may need to be transferred to a computer network and/or computer file storage denoted schematically at 46. For that purpose it is converted to an MXF file in this illustrative embodiment. The SDTI-CP bitstream is reproduced by the recorder 38 and fed to a de-embedder 40. The de-embedder 40
10 separates the Header Metadata from the compressed MPEG2 ES of the SDTI-CP content package and supplies them to an MXF file creator 42. Assuming the SDTI CP bitstream contains only one Header Metadata structure and its repeats, the de-embedder preferably supplies only one complete Header Metadata data structure (and no repetitions of it) to the creator 42. The MXF creator 42 maps the Header metadata
15 into the file header of the MXF file and the MPEG2 ES stream into the file body of the MXF file as shown in Figure 2.

The MXF file may be transferred to the network and/or computer file storage denoted schematically at 46. The MXF file may be transferred from the network and/or storage 46 to a recorder 54, which may be identical to the recorder 38. The
20 MXF file is fed to a demultiplexer 48, which separates the Header Metadata from the file body of the MXF file. The compressed MPEG2 ES stream of the file body and the Header Metadata are fed to respective inputs of an encoder 50 which repetitively embeds the Header Metadata into the ancillary data space of the MPEG2 ES stream which is then embedded in the picture item of an SDTI-CP content package by an
25 SDTI interface 52. The SDTI-CP bitstream is recorded in the recorder 54. The SDTI-CP bitstream may be reproduced by the recorder 54 and fed to an SDTI decoder 56, which outputs the MPEG2 ES stream containing the repeated Header Metadata in its ancillary data space. The video is decompressed by an MPEG2 decoder 58 and the Header metadata is mapped into the VBI of an SDI stream and the decompressed
30 video is mapped into the active video space of the SDI stream. The decompressed video and the Header Metadata may be derived from an SDI interface 60.

The embodiment of Figure 11 uses an audio channel to contain header metadata. Referring to Figure 11, Header Metadata is created in a metadata creator 30. The header metadata has the data structure shown in Figures 2 and 3. The Header Metadata is inserted into audio frames as shown in Figure 8 using a suitable
5 multiplexer 92 in an audio interface 44 and the Header Metadata is repeated, each repeat beginning in a new packet (packet $m=0$) at the beginning of a new frame, each complete Header Metadata data structure occupying a integer number of frames. Preferably as described above one frame contains only one whole packet set p where each packet set contains only one packet.

10 The SDI bitstream contains uncompressed digital video in its active video data space. An MPEG encoder 34 compresses the digital video into an MPEG2 ES elementary stream.

An SDTI-CP interface 36 maps the MPEG2 ES, into the picture item of an SDTI-CP content package. The audio containing the repeated Header Metadata is
15 mapped into the audio item of the SDTI-CP content package.

The blocks 38 to 48 of the embodiment of Figure 11 operate in the same way as discussed with reference to Figure 10.

The encoder 50 embeds the header metadata repetitively into audio frames and an SDTI-CP encoder 52 maps the audio frames to the audio item of an SDTI-CP
20 content package and maps the compressed video to the picture item. The SDTI-CP bitstream is recorded in recorder 54 reproduced and decoded in a decoder 56, which separates the audio from the MPEG2 ES stream. An audio decoder 62 separates and outputs the Header Metadata and audio.

The embodiment of Figure 12 operates in much the same way as that of Figure
25 10 except that the Header Metadata produced by creator 30 is embedded using a multiplexer 94 of an SDTI encoder 36 in the system item (shown in Figure 6) of an SDTI-CP content package. Referring to Figure 6, the Header UL of the Header Metadata follows immediately after the SAV in the system item. Blocks 38 to 54 operate as described with reference to Figure 10. The SDTI decoder 56 separates the
30 Header Metadata from the system item.

Those skilled in the art will recognise that, at the priority date of this patent application, whilst SDTI with system items is allowed in the relevant SMPTE standards, many data recorders, as exemplified by 38 and 54, do not yet support the use of system items.

5 Illustrative Network

Figure 13 illustrates a network which uses streaming format signals such as SDI and SDTI and MXF files. An SDI bitstream is supplied to an MPEG digital video tape recorder 100. The recorder 100 MPEG encodes the video (and audio) components of the SDI bitstream and records the encoded components. The recorder in this example outputs an SDTI-CP or SDTI-DV bitstream containing the encoded components for transfer to a video file server 102 which records streaming format signals. The server 102 has an interface which produces MXF files and delivers MXF files to a computer network 106 having file servers 104, a router 108, a control computer 110 and a Tape archive 112. The MXF file allows exchange of material between the file servers 104, the archive 112 and the video file server 102.

Header metadata is mapped into the SDI and SDTI bitstreams as described above. The MXF files are produced by the server 102 as described above.

Modifications

Embodiments of the invention have been described above with reference to MPEG2 compression systems. Any other compression systems may be used.

Embodiments of the invention have been described above with reference to MXF files. Other types of file may be used provided the Header Metadata repeated as described above can be mapped into the file.

Embodiments of the invention have been described above with reference to SDI and SDTI. Other formats can be used provided the Header Metadata can be packetised, repeated and mapped into video or audio frames as described above.

Figures 10 to 12 show mapping of SDI into SDTI followed by mapping of SDTI into an MXF file. In alternative embodiments, SDI is mapped directly into an MXF file, the file body containing uncompressed video. The Header Metadata is contained in audio frames or in the VBI lines in the file body. Thus referring to Figure 14 Header Metadata is created by a creator 30. Audio is encoded by an encoder 44. An SDI encoder 32 inserts uncompressed video into the active data space. The header

Metadata is inserted into either audio frames operating in non-audio mode or into the VBI as described above. The metadata is repetitively distributed over the SDI video frames in the VBI or in the audio frames as described above. A recorder 381 records the SDI bitstream without compression of the video. The recorder may be a disc recorder or a tape recorder. The SDI bitstream is reproduced from the recorder and a data de-embedder 40 separates the Header Metadata from the video and audio. An MXF file creator 42 maps the Header Metadata into the file header and the video and audio into the file body as shown in Figure 1. The MXF file may be transferred to the network and/or computer file storage denoted schematically at 46. The MXF file may be transferred from the network and/or storage 46 to a recorder 541, which may be identical to the recorder 381. For that purpose, the MXF file is fed from the network/storage 46 to an SDI encoder which maps the MXF file into an SDI bitstream with repetition of the Header Metadata as described above. The recorder 541 records the SDI bitstream which may be reproduced therefrom and an SDI decoder 60 separates the Header Metadata, the video and the audio. .

The invention may be implemented on a digital signal or data processing system which is programmable. Thus the invention may be a computer program product containing instructions which when run on the signal or data processing system implement the invention.

CLAIMS

1. A method of combining digital data with other digital material comprising the steps of:

structuring the said digital data into a predetermined data structure;

5 creating a digital bitstream having a predetermined repetitive format compatible with a data recorder each repetition of the format including at least one data space for the said other material and a data space for other data; and

repetitively including the data structure over a plurality of repetitions of the format, the said data structure being included in the said other data space or in part of
10 the data space of the said other material.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the said digital data is metadata associated with the other material.

3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the said other material comprises video material.

15 4. A method according to claim 3, wherein the said at least one data space for the other material includes a video data space.

5. A method according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the said other material comprises audio material.

6. A method according to claim 5, wherein the said at least one data space for the
20 other material includes an audio data space.

7. A method according to claim 6, wherein the said digital data is included in the audio data space.

8. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein the said digital data is included in the said other data space.

25 9. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein the said other data space is an ancillary data space.

10. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein the said data structure comprises a value field containing the said data, a key field and a length field indicating the amount of data in the value field.

11. A method according to any preceding claim wherein the said format is repeated in frames, and each repetition of the said digital data structure begins on a frame containing no data of a previous occurrence of the said data structure.
12. A method according to claim 11, wherein each occurrence of the said data
5 structures is distributed over an integer number of frames.
13. A method according to claim 11 or 12, wherein the said data structure comprises packets of data, and each repetition thereof starts in a packet containing no data of a previous occurrence of the data structure.
14. A method according to claim 12, wherein the packets are ordinal
10 ly numbered and each repetition of the data structure begins in a packet having a predetermined number.
15. A method according to claim 13 or 14, wherein each frame contains a set of packets of the data structure, each set consisting of an integer number of complete packets.
16. A method according to claim 11, 12, 13, 14 or 15, wherein the said repetitive
15 format is that of a Serial Digital Interface (SDI) bitstream.
17. A method according to claim 16, wherein the said data structure is repetitively included in audio frames operating in non-audio mode.
18. A method according to claim 17, when dependent on claim 12 or 13, wherein
20 each set of packets is contained in a window within an audio frame, the window being spaced from the boundaries of the frame by guard bands.
19. A method according to claim 17, wherein the said data structure is included in a Vertical Ancillary data space (VANC) of the SDI bitstream.
- 20 A method according to any one of claims 16 to 19, comprising the further step
25 of creating an Serial Data Transport Interface (SDTI) bitstream from the content of the SDI bitstream.
21. A method according to claim 10 or 11, wherein the audio frames are contained in an SDTI data structure.
22. A method according to claim 11, 12, 13, 14 or 15, wherein the said
30 other material comprises at least video material, and the said repetitive format is that of an SDTI bitstream having at least an audio item and a picture item.

23. A method according to claim 21, wherein the said data structure is repetitively included in audio frames operating in non-audio mode in the said audio item.

24. A method according to claim 22 when dependent on claim 12 or 13, wherein each set of packets is contained in a window within an audio frame, the window being spaced from the boundaries of the frame by guard bands.

25. A method according to claim 21, wherein the said data structure is included in a Vertical Ancillary data space (VANC) within the picture item of the SDTI bitstream.

26. A method according to claim 21 when dependent on claim 12 or 13, wherein one set of packets is contained in one line of the Vertical Ancillary data space.

27. A method according to claim 21, wherein the SDTI bitstream comprises a system item and the said data structure is included in the system item.

28. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein a plurality of different data structures having respective identifiers are repetitively distributed in the said format.

29. A method according to any preceding claim comprising the step of mapping the combined data and other material from the said repetitive format into a file in which the said data structure is contained in one part of the file and the other material is contained in another part of the file.

30. A method according to claim 29, wherein the file comprises a file header, a file body containing the said other material and a file footer.

31. A method according to claim 29 or 30, wherein the file is an MXF file and the data is Header Metadata thereof.

32. A method according to claim 29, 30 or 31, comprising the further step of mapping the data structure and the other material from the file into digital bitstream having a predetermined repetitive format compatible with a data recorder each repetition of the format including at least one data space for the said other material and a data space for other data; and

repetitively including the data structure over a plurality of repetitions of the format, the said data structure being included in the said other data space or in part of the data space of the said other material.

33. A method comprising the steps of:

receiving a digital bitstream including digital data in a predetermined data structure and other digital material, the bitstream having a predetermined repetitive format compatible with a data recorder each repetition of the format including at least one data space for the said other material and a data space for other data and
5 repetitively including the data structure over a plurality of repetitions of the format, the said data structure being included in the said other data space or in part of the data space of the said other material; and

separating the said data structure from the other material.

34. A method according to claim 33 comprising the further steps of
10 deriving the said signal from a file, into which the said data structure and other material is mapped and wherein the said data structure is contained in one part of the file and the other material is contained in another part of the file, by inverse mapping the said data structure and the other material from the file into the said signal.

35. A method according to any preceding claim and substantially as
15 hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 1 to 13 of the accompanying drawings.

36. Signal processing apparatus arranged to carry out the method of any preceding claim.

37. A computer program product arranged to carry out the method of any
20 one of claims 1 to 35 when run on a signal processor.

38. A digital bitstream including digital data in a predetermined data structure and other digital material, the bitstream having a predetermined repetitive format compatible with a data recorder each repetition of the format including at least one data space for the said other material and a data space for other data; and
25 repetitively including the data structure over a plurality of repetitions of the format, the said data structure being included in the said other data space or in part of the data space of the said other material.

39. A bitstream according to claim 38, and produced by the method of any one of claims 1 to 35.

30 40. A bitstream according to claim 39 and substantially as hereinbefore described with reference the accompanying drawings.

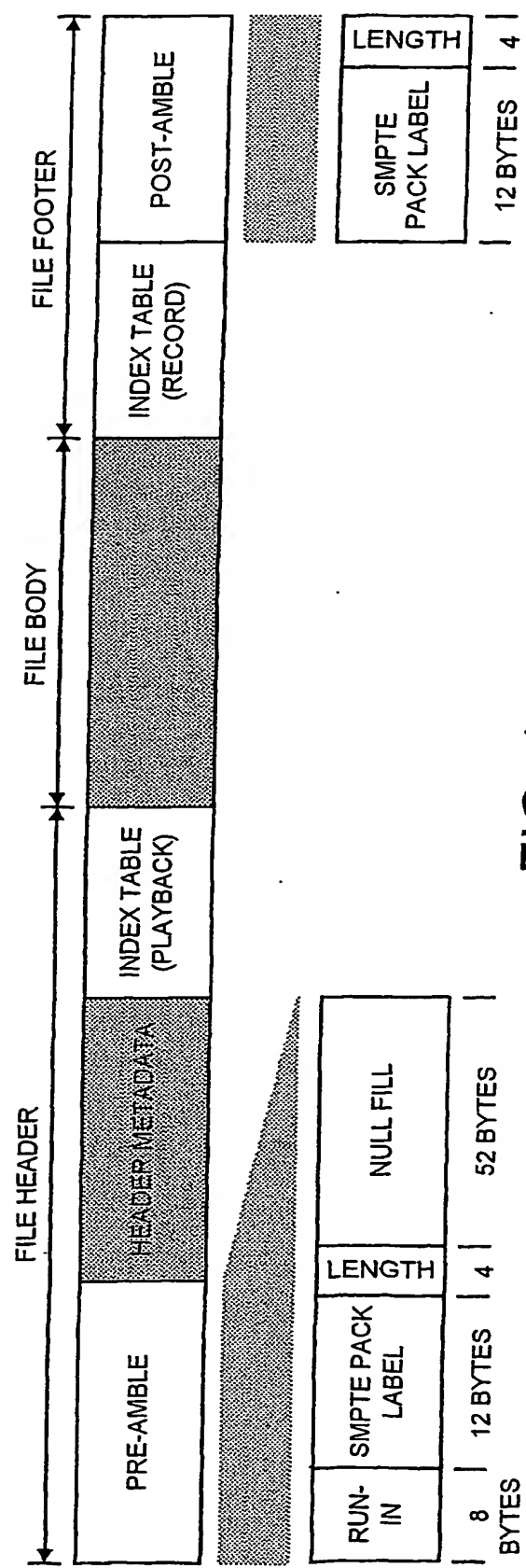


FIG. 1

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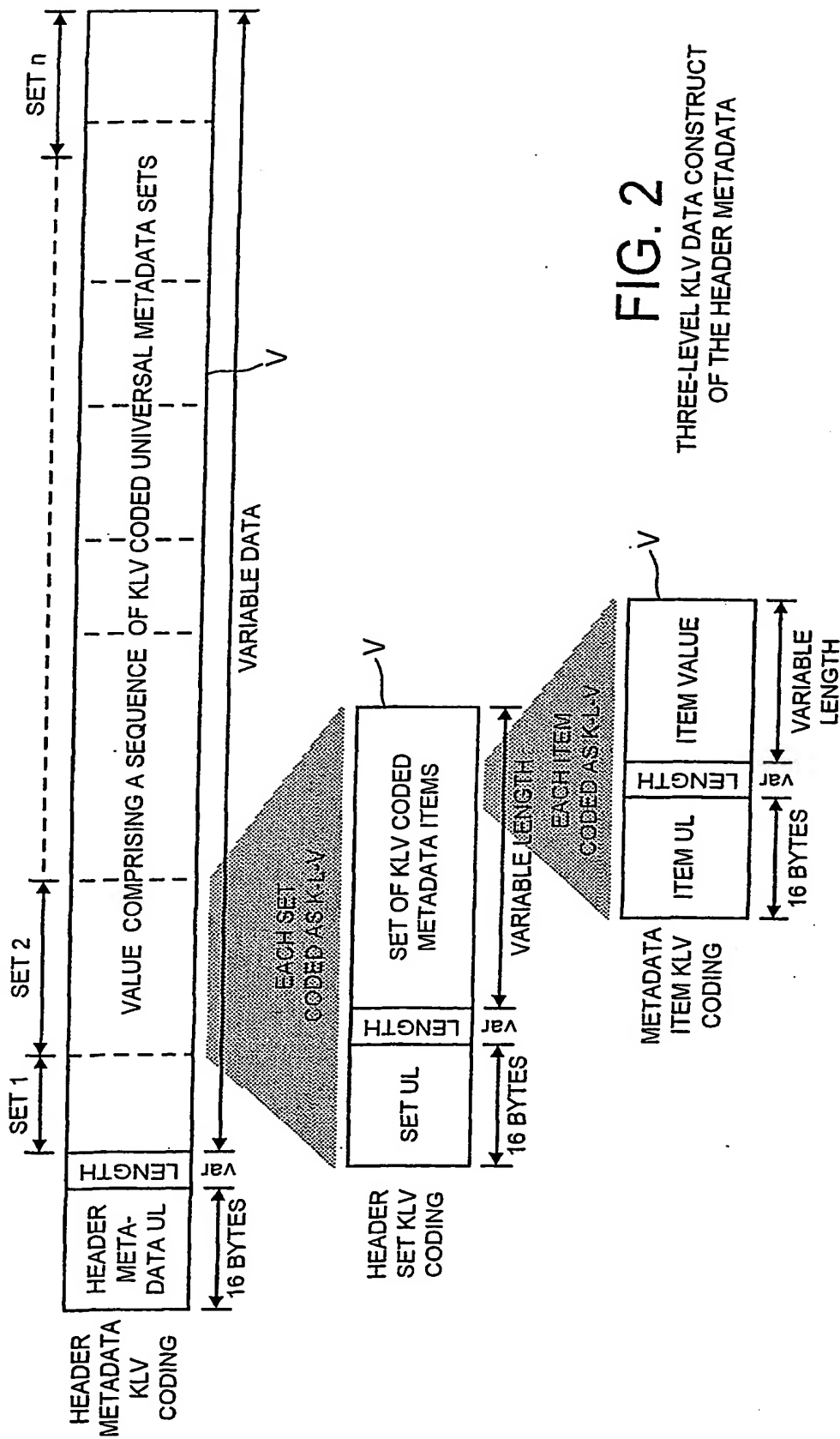
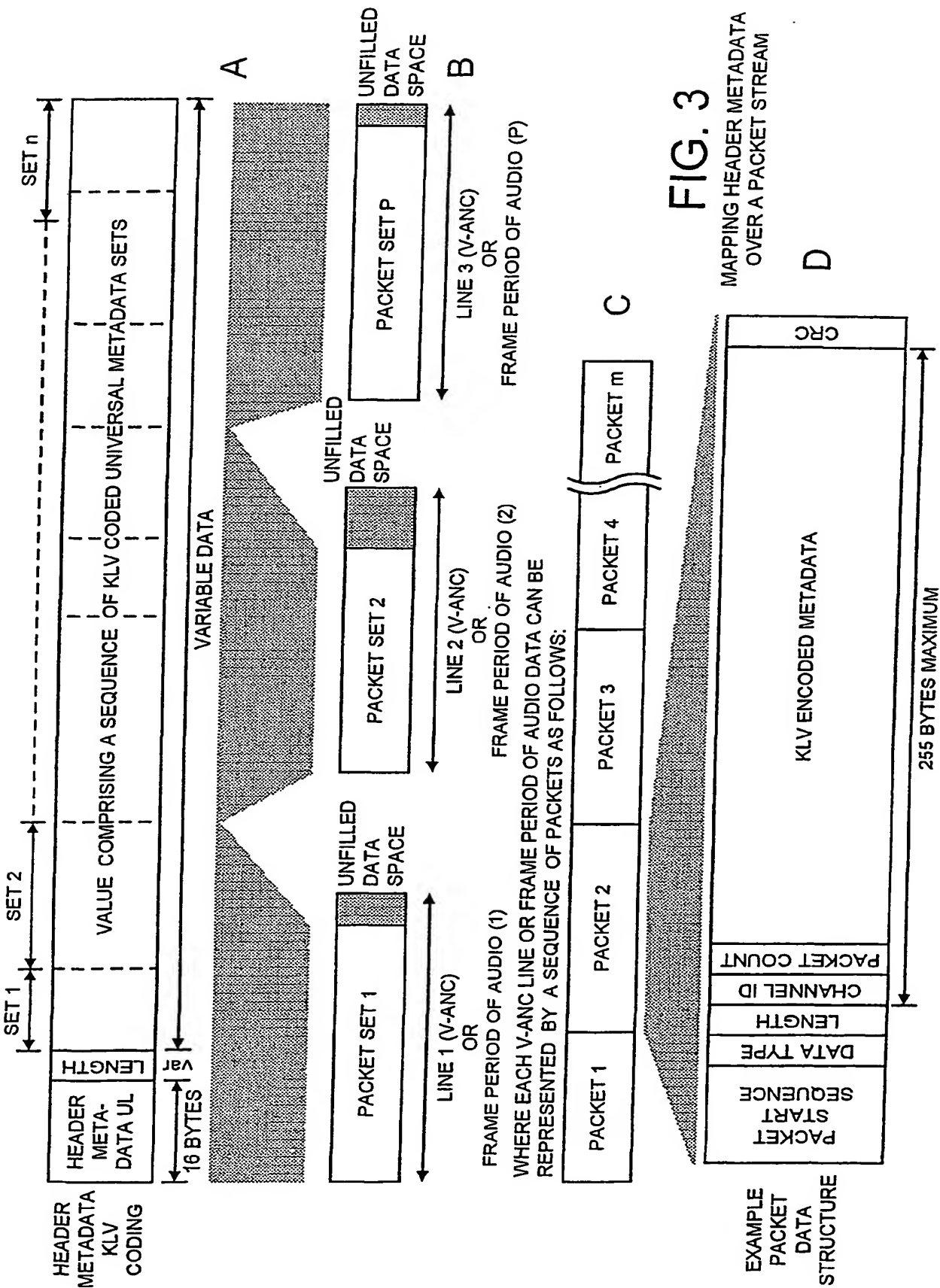


FIG. 2
THREE-LEVEL KLV DATA CONSTRUCT
OF THE HEADER METADATA



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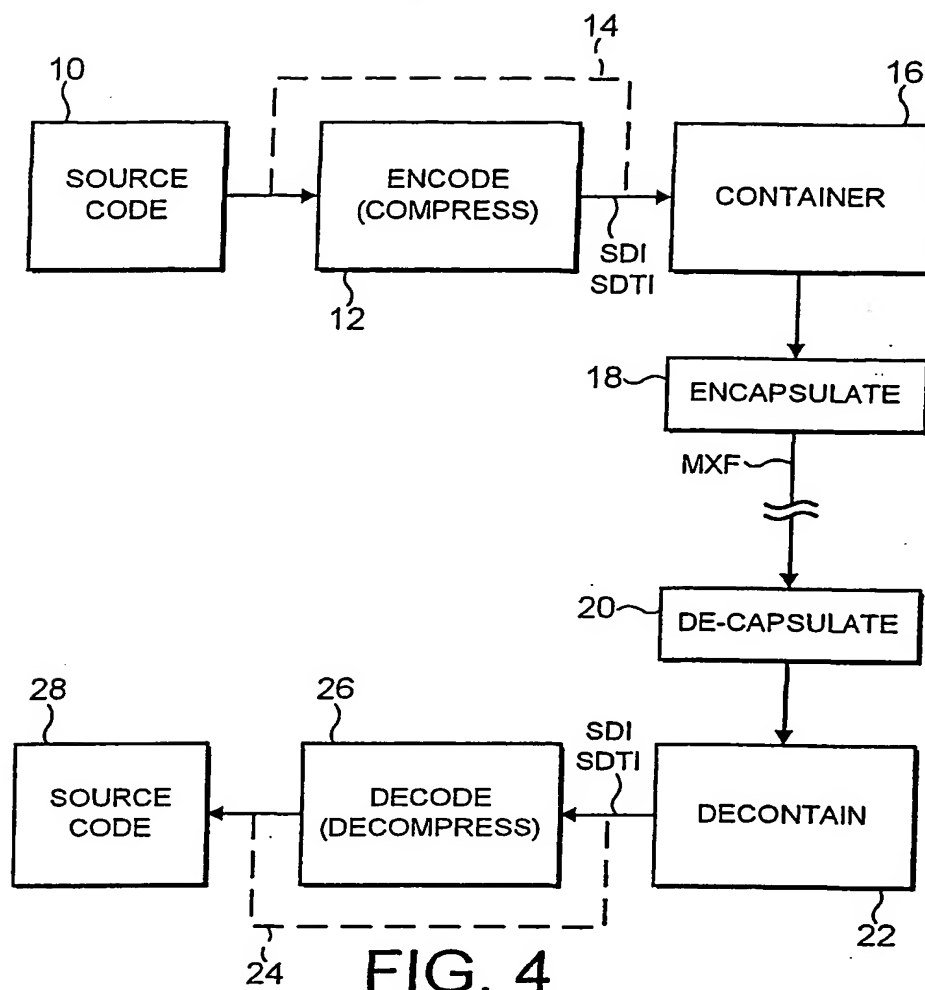


FIG. 4

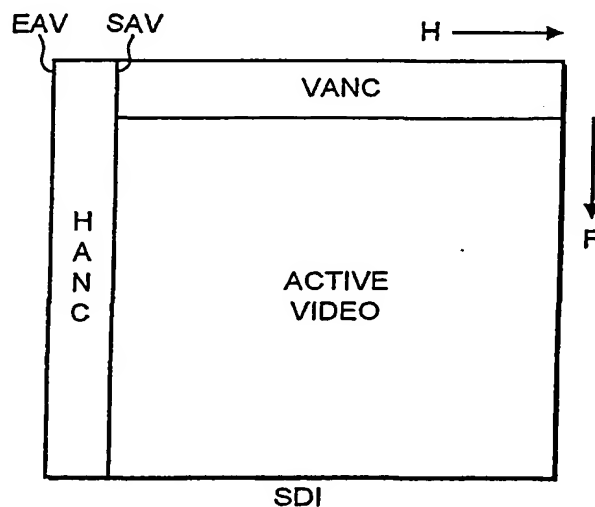


FIG. 5

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FIG. 6

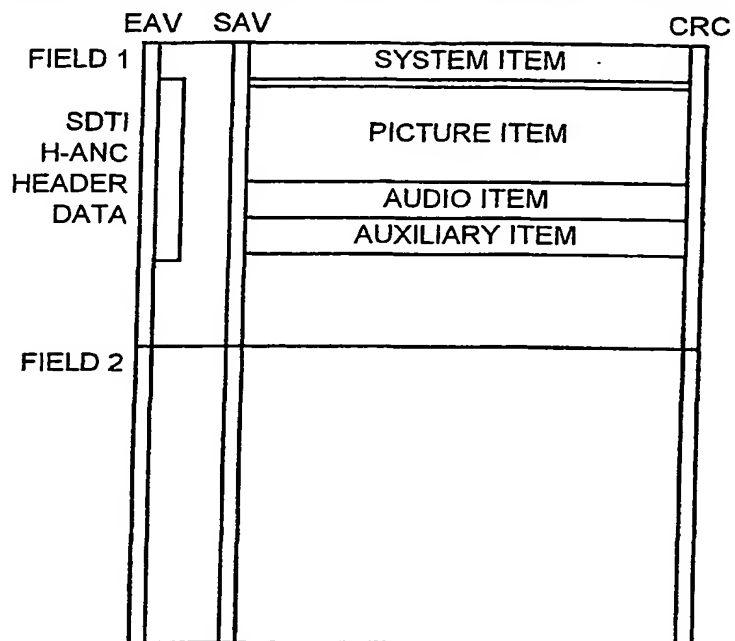
ARRANGEMENT OF SYSTEM, PICTURE, AUDIO AND
AUXILIARY ITEMS IN A CONTENT PACKAGE ON SDTI

FIG. 7

CONTENT PACKAGE STRUCTURE

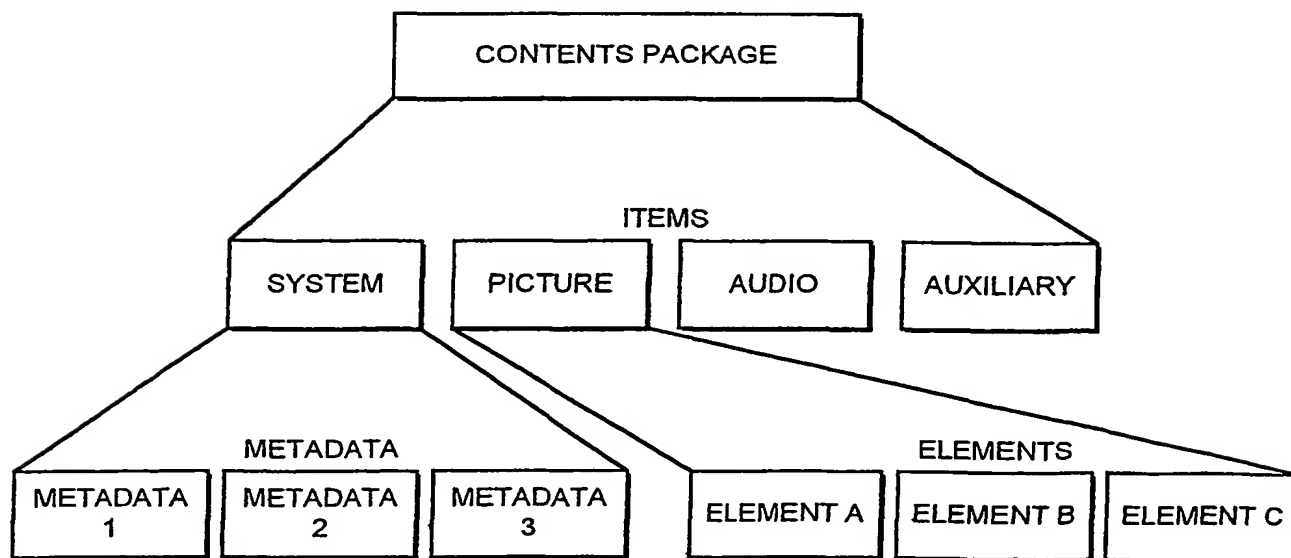


FIG. 8

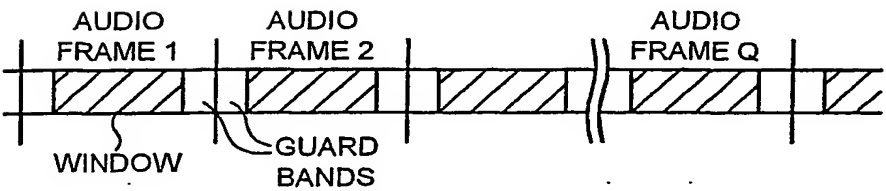
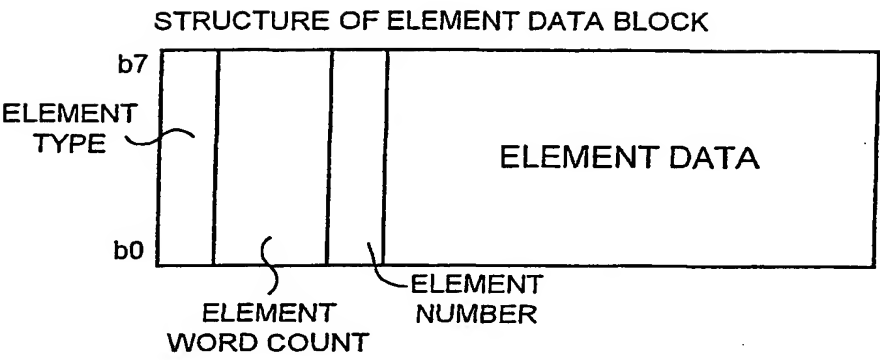


FIG. 9

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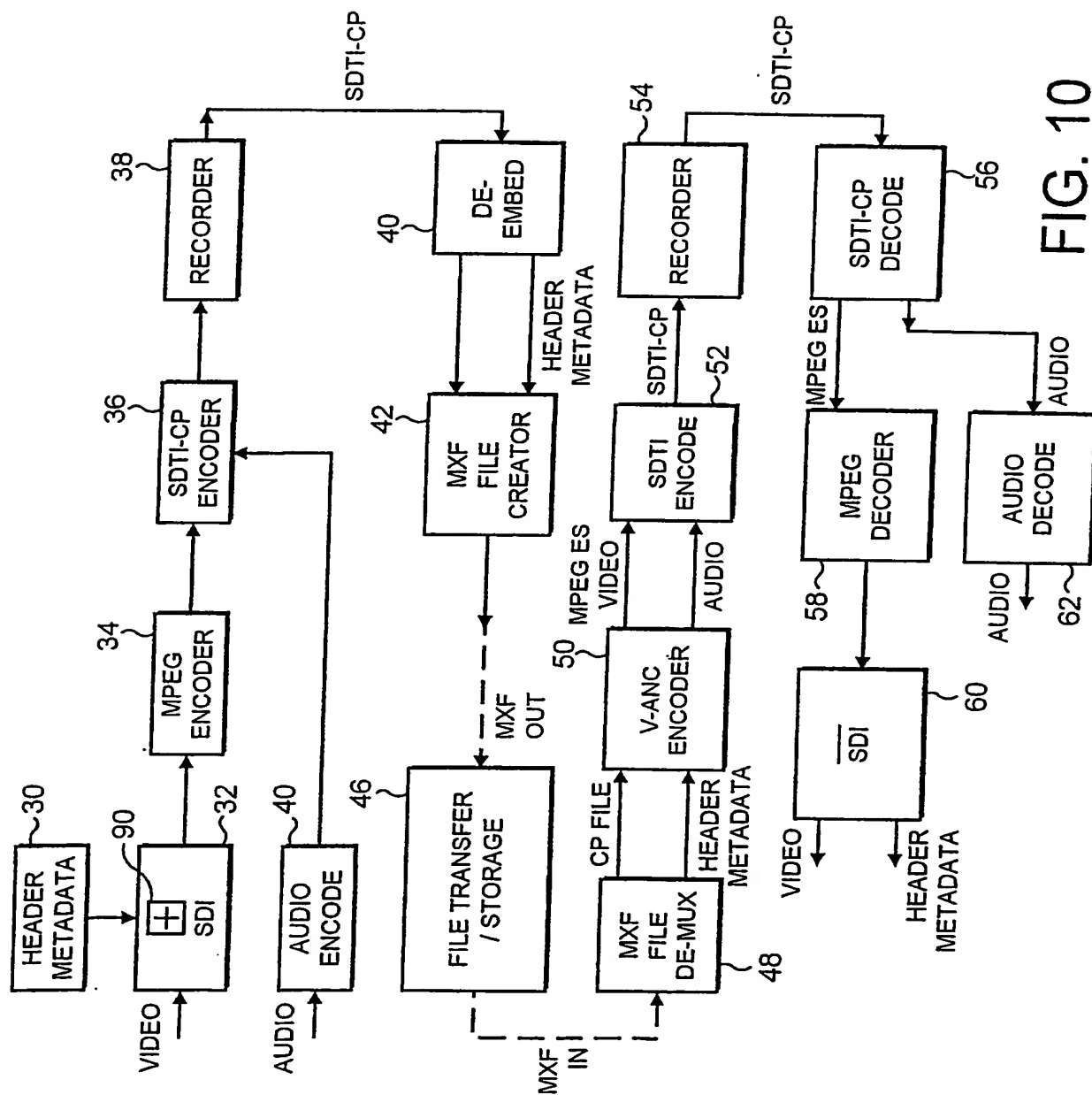


FIG. 10

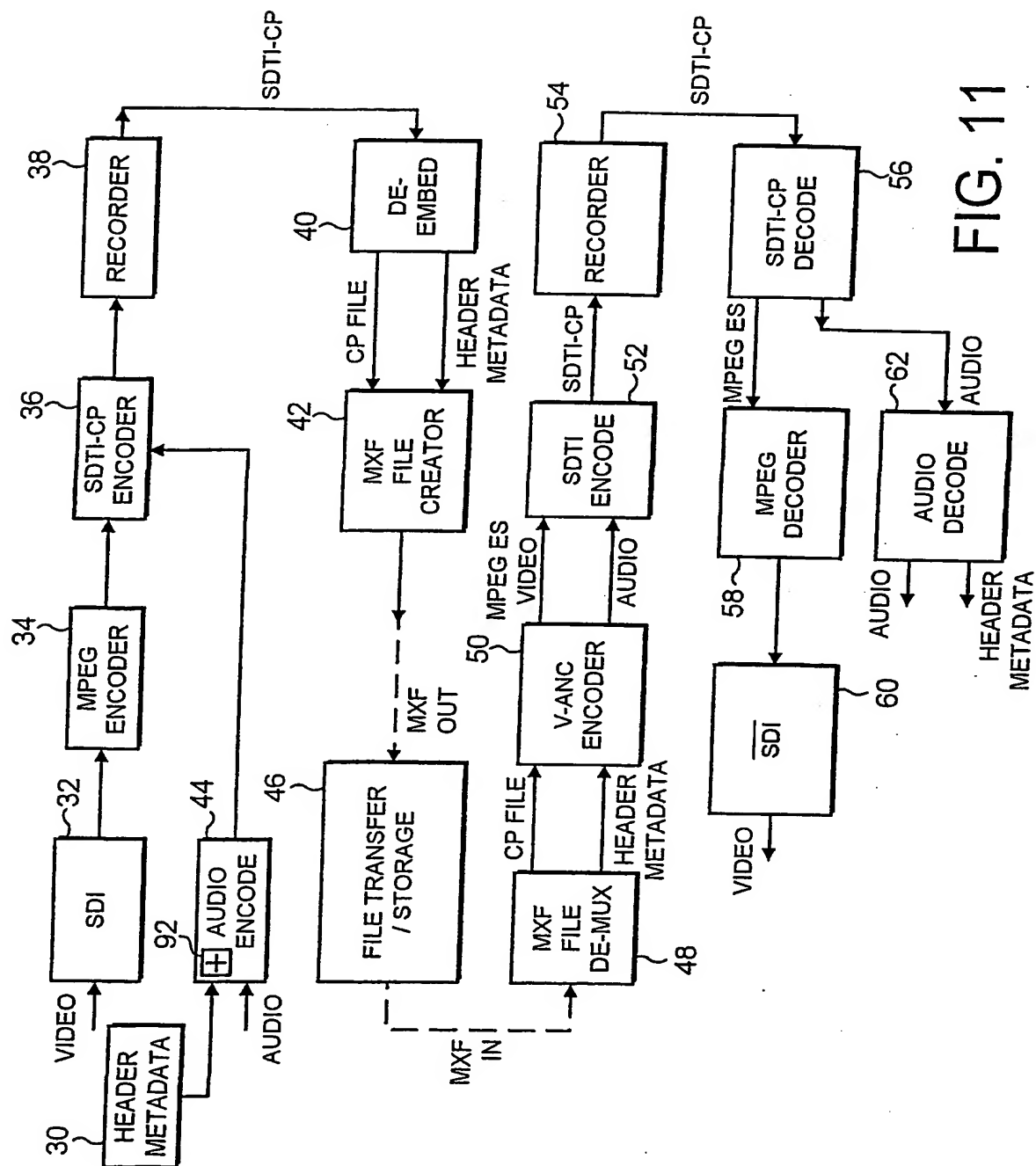


FIG. 11

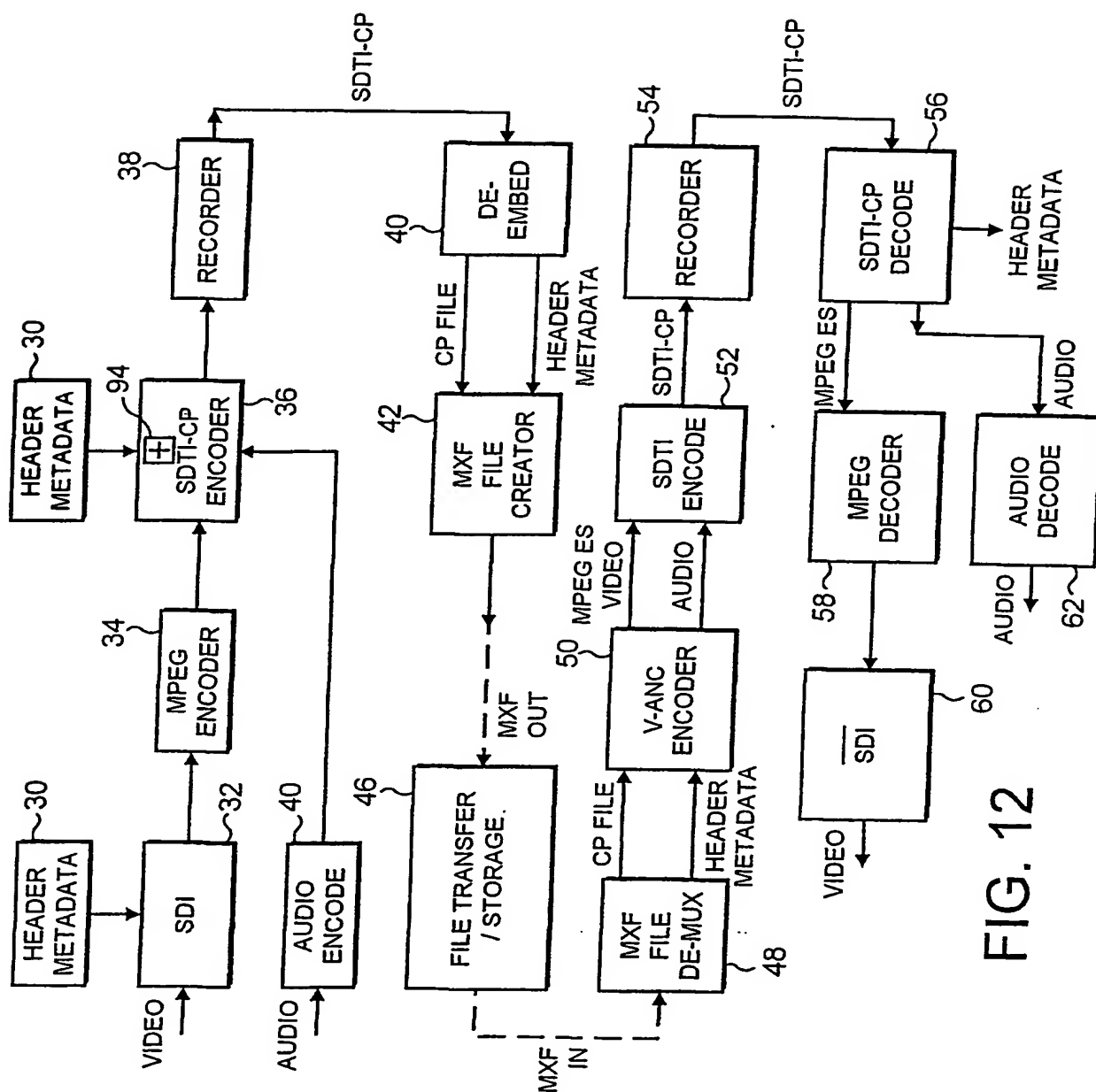
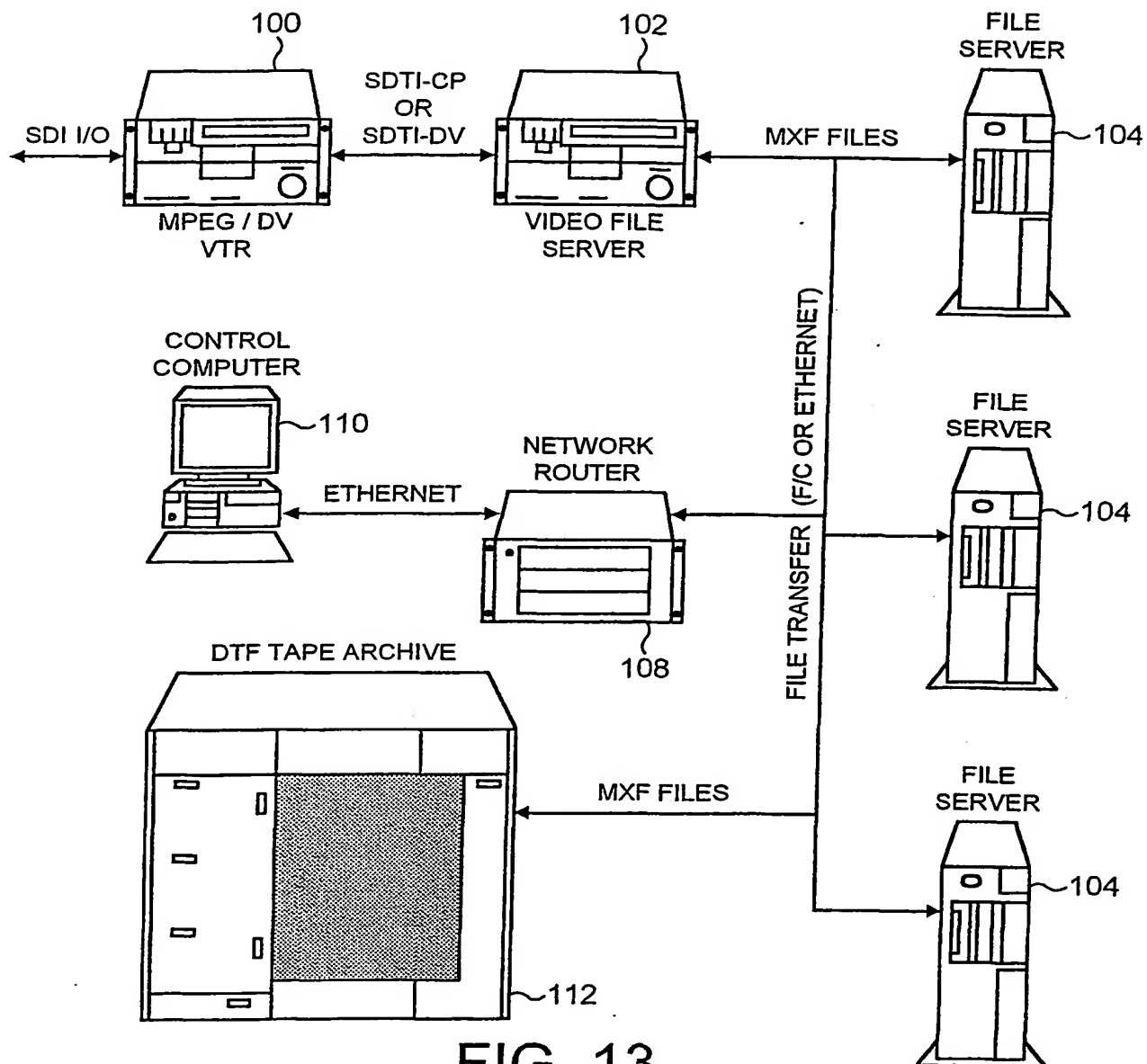


FIG. 12

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**FIG. 13**

MXF FILES AND STREAMING FORMATS

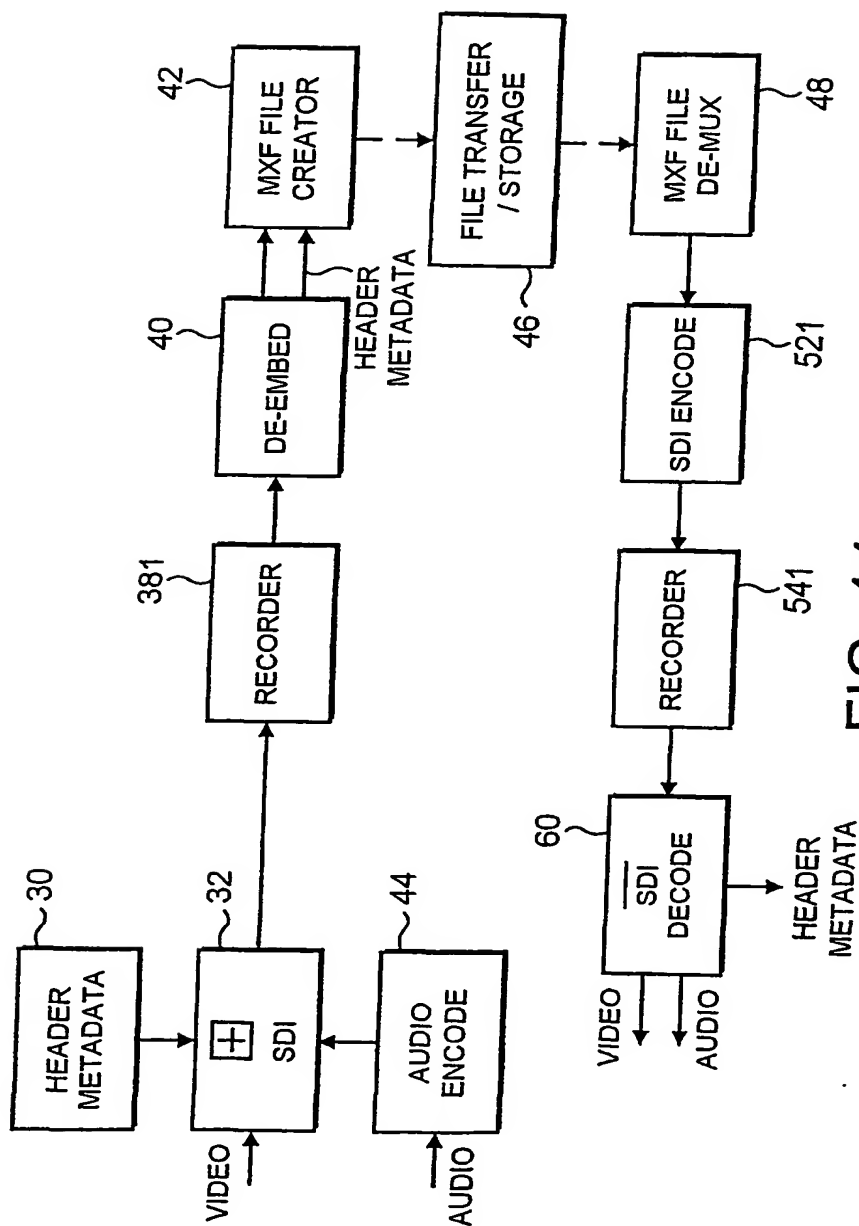


FIG. 14

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Int'l Application No

PCT/GB 01/03967

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 H04N7/24

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 H04N G11B

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, INSPEC

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☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

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X document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

Y document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

& document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

14 December 2001

Date of mailing of the international search report

27/12/2001

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Marie-Julie, J-M

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Int'l Application No

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